

**SPEECH DELIVERED BY MEC FOR PUBLIC WORKS
HONOURABLE MR.HOWARD YAWA, MPL AT A MEETING
WITH CONSULTANTS HELD ON TUESDAY 16 AUGUST 2005
AT THE EMBASSY HALL, MAFIKENG.**

Programme Director

Head of the Department-Dr L.K. Sebego

Senior Managers of the Department

Leaders of organised professional bodies

Consultants

Contractors

Ladies and Gentlemen

The delivery of public sector infrastructure is in itself a structured form of partnership between public and private sector role-players.

In our case it is a structured partnership for the implementation of our mandate to deliver quality public infrastructure.

Governments the world over have been notoriously poor as direct delivery agents. Since 1994 the democratic government in its endeavour to raise the standard of service delivery adopted for new service oriented procurement methods that seek to redefine our role as:

- An articulator of public demand,
- As a shrewd and capable purchaser of services
- As an effective monitor of performance
- As a prompt payer for services.

To deliver on our mandate and to meet the needs of our client departments, we have appointed you as consultants to act as our delivery agents and to provide expert services to us in your relevant professional disciplines.

We appointed you to act as our delivery agents and not the middleman between the contractor and the Department. We are also in no doubt that as professionals you are conversant with contracts and specifications to oversee our projects.

We therefore in addition to comprehensive reports, expect regular and timeous communications with ourselves. If specific directives are required from the department, they must be applied for separately. Let us keep surprises out of our partnership. Whenever intervention is required, it must be made timeously.

We expect consultants to be cost conscious and to be vigilant in progress control and quality control. Contractors that are behind schedule must be placed on notice sooner rather than later. Whenever a contractor needs extension of time, it must be applied for as per contract. We therefore do not expect or anticipate surprises!

We also expect contractors working under your supervision and guidance to work in line with contract, specifications and drawings. We expect them to be fair employers who are also safety conscious. As partners in service delivery we expect them to be honest and open with us whenever problems crop up to allow the department to assist in finding win-win solutions.

As a department we prefer Joint Ventures among consultants to deliver projects in order to ensure transfer of skills from non-affirmative professional service providers to affirmative professional service providers.

Since government is empowering emerging contractors, consultants with their expertise in the building environment are also expected to guide emerging contractors towards successful implementation and delivery of Projects.

We wish to urge you as Consultants and contractors to commit yourselves to ensure that projects reach their final stages and that final accounts are submitted to the department to close up the projects.

Contractors who fail to address the snag lists to ensure that projects reach their final completion will henceforth be classified as high risk and their chances of being awarded projects will be lessened .The tendency to ignore snag lists affects our budgets negatively and is therefore unacceptable.

To accelerate the provision of quality public infrastructure, we need the partnership of consultants and contractors who share our values and sing from the same hymnbook with us. We expect you to cope with our demand for accountability and prompt delivery. This to us is nothing less than delivery of projects within shorter time frames, on budget and to a higher standard of quality.

As a department we recognise that development of the emerging sector continues to grapple with a range of supply-side constraints, including access to finance, sureties and credit, entrepreneurial skills and cash flow management, which is a critical success factor.

We also recognise that delayed payments and settlement of final accounts place a strain on contractors and professional service providers alike. In order to eliminate these impediments to service delivery my department has adopted a new policy committing ourselves to Performance Improvement Practices by transforming government procurement and provisioning into an integrated supply chain management function.

The new policy also introduces a systematic approach for the appointment of consultants and creates a common understanding and interpretation of the preferential procurement policy. The policy is aimed at promoting the consistent application of “best practices” throughout government supply chain.

What this means effectively is that all for construction payment certificates, consultants must first verify all invoices from contractors and prepare a payment certificate for processing of payment by the department at a targeted 15 days turnaround for correct invoices and a maximum 30 days for others.

I therefore commit the department to deliver what is due to you as consultants and contractors as per budget and within the shortest possible time frame.

We are committed to a partnership that strives to build a South Africa that truly belongs to all. We are committed to a partnership

that shares our vision of a transformed construction industry that creates opportunities for empowerment of women, youth and the disabled.

In Conclusion Programme Director I wish to remind consultants and contractors of my department's resolve to denounce business as usual and call on them to join hands with us in accelerating service delivery.

Ke a leboga.